



News Release

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For Immediate Release

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Federal Agencies Announce Modified Road Closures To Protect Sonoran Pronghorn

Some Federal Lands Closed from mid-March to mid-July

Ajo, AZ – As part of ongoing efforts to recover endangered Sonoran pronghorn, seasonal road closures will again take effect on public lands near Ajo during the species fawning season. Affected lands include Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, Barry M. Goldwater Range and the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge. The seasonal closure period, as determined by the Sonoran Pronghorn Recovery Team, runs from **March 15, 2011 through July 15, 2011**. A map of the roads and areas affected by this closure is available at the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge Office and at <http://www.fws.gov/southwest/refuges/arizona/cabeza/>.

Individual agencies should be contacted for further information regarding closures on specific lands.

Each year, the Sonoran Pronghorn Recovery Teams determines the onset of the seasonal closure based upon rainfall and resulting forage conditions available for these desert ranging pronghorn. The seasonal closure is used as a management tool to minimize disturbance to adult does and their fawns during the spring and early summer when the fawns are most vulnerable.

Only one Sonoran Pronghorn population exists in the United States. An estimated 85% of the U.S. population died during a severe drought in 2001 and 2002, and the remaining U.S. population is currently estimated at 80 - 90 animals.

North America's fastest land animal, the Sonoran Pronghorn is related to four other subspecies of Pronghorn in western North America. The Sonoran Pronghorn was listed as "endangered" in 1967 under the Endangered Species Preservation Act. Endangered species status means that a plant or animal is "...in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range." The three subspecies that occur in Mexico are protected under Mexican law.

The United States and Mexico are currently engaged in an international effort to capture and breed the Sonoran Pronghorn for reintroduction into suitable habitats. Capture-breed-transplant actions are considered essential to the survival of the Sonoran pronghorn because the Sonoran pronghorn (commonly referred to as 'antelope') is now one of the most endangered mammals in the world.

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